United Nations A/C.5/56/16

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 November 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Fifth Committee
Agenda items 123 and 112

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Advancement of women

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 28th meeting, on 1 November 2001, the Third Committee adopted, without a vote, draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26. The Committee was informed that the programme budget implications of the draft resolution were the same as those contained in annex VII to the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women,[1] and consisted of additional requirements in the amount of $252,900 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

I. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 13 and 14 of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26, the General Assembly would:

(a) Acknowledge the number of reports awaiting consideration by the Committee and, in this regard, decide to authorize the Committee to hold, on an exceptional basis, an extraordinary session of three weeks' duration in 2002 to be used entirely for the consideration of the reports of the States parties in order to reduce the backlog of reports, and to enlarge the membership of the pre-sessional working group in 2002 in order to prepare for the exceptional session of the Committee, taking into account decision 25/I of the Committee;

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/56/38).

01-64692 (E) 211101

(b) Request the Secretary-General, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999, to provide the resources, including staff and facilities, necessary for the effective functioning of the Committee within its full mandate, in particular taking into account the entry into force of the Optional Protocol.

II. Relationship of the requests to the programme of work

3. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women would hold an additional session in August 2002 of 15 working days' duration. It is understood that the additional session would not be followed by a meeting of the pre-sessional working group.

4. Provision has been made under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 for the convening of the two annual sessions of the Committee and the meetings of its working groups. The programme of work of section 9, under paragraph 9.55 (a) (iii), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, would be modified to increase, from 120 to 150, the number of meetings of the Committee and its working group to be serviced.

5. The additional session of the Committee and the enlargement of its pre-sessional working group called for in operative paragraph 13 of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26 would give rise to additional requirements related to the travel and per diem costs for the 23 members of the Committee to attend the session and the per diem costs of the additional members of the pre-sessional working group in February 2002, as well as additional conference servicing requirements.

6. Regarding the requests contained in operative paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, provision has been made under section 9 for the servicing of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Secretary-General, in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, has given consideration to the entry into force of the Optional Protocol and the resulting expansion in volume and complexity of the workload. He has accordingly proposed the establishment of three new posts (one P-4 human rights officer, one P-2 associate legal officer and one General Service (Other level)) to undertake various tasks relating to the entry into force of the Optional Protocol. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposals for one P-4 human rights officer and one P-2 associate legal officer but has declined the establishment of the General Service (Other level) post.[2]

III. Additional requirements

7. The additional costs arising from an additional session of the Committee and the enlargement of its pre-sessional working group called for in operative paragraph 13 of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26 are enumerated below.

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 7* (A/56/7), chap. II, para. IV.8.

A. Section 9, Economic and social affairs

8. The travel and per diem costs for the members attending the session and for the additional members attending the enlarged pre-sessional working group are estimated to be as follows:

	United States dollars
(a) Additional session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	
(i) Travel costs (for 23 members of the Committee to New York)	115 900
(ii) Per diem (for 23 members of the Committee)	117 100
(iii) Terminal expenses	3 700
Subtotal	**236 700**
(b) Enlargement of pre-sessional working group	
Per diem	16 200
Total	**252 900**

B. Section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services

9. The additional session would require conference servicing of 30 meetings, with interpretation in six languages. There would be 2,700 pages (2 documents) of pre-session, 100 pages (10 documents) of in-session and 40 pages (1 document) of post-session documentation for the meetings, to be processed in six languages. It is understood that there would be no additional meeting of the pre-sessional working group. The cost estimates (on a full-cost basis) are as follows:

Conference servicing of the session

	United States dollars
(a) Conference servicing and interpretation	205 400
(b) Pre-session documentation	3 066 400
(c) In-session documentation	113 100
(d) Post-session documentation	45 700
Total	**3 430 600**

IV. Potential for absorption

10. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 contains provisions for two annual sessions of the Committee and two annual meetings of the pre-sessional working group. It is not anticipated, at the present stage, that the above-mentioned additional requirements for travel and per diem ($252,900) could be met within the resources proposed under section 9, Economic and social affairs.

11. It should be noted that the estimates of additional conference servicing requirements are based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the requirements would be met from the permanent conference-servicing capacity included under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The extent to which the Organization's conference-servicing capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance could be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences and meetings for 2002-2003. Provision has been included under section 2 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, not only for meetings programmed at the time of preparation of the budget, but also for meetings that might be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. As a result, no additional resources would be required under that section.

V. Contingency fund

12. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a subsequent biennium.

13. No activities could be identified, at the present stage, for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 in order to accommodate the additional requirements of $252,900 referred to above.

VI. Summary

14. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.26, an additional provision of $252,900 would be required under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The additional requirements would represent a charge against the contingency fund for the biennium 2002-2003, which will be adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session in accordance with the procedures established by the Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211.**